



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

Manual:	NJAC	NJ Administrative Code Excerpts	Effective Date:
Title	10	Human Services	
Chapter	121A	Manual Of Requirements For Adoption Agencies	11/3/2008
Subchapter:	5	Services	
Section	10	Searches (N.J.A.C. 10:121A-5.10)	

§10:121A-5.10 Searches

(a) An agency that conducts searches on behalf of adult adoptees, birth parents when the adopted child is 18 years of age or older, or adoptive parents when the child is under 18 years of age, shall establish a written policy that outlines the procedures regarding confidentiality as specified in N.J.A.C. 10:121A-3.6(a)1 through 4 and the extent to which searches are conducted. This policy shall also include a fee schedule for conducting the search and time frames for completing a search.

(b) A search shall include, but not be limited to:

1. A review of the agency record for background information on the birth or adoptive family, including:

- i. The last known address;
- ii. Names of the male/female members;
- iii. Social Security numbers;
- iv. Occupations and addresses of places of employment;
- v. Military services, if known;
- vi. Clubs or union affiliations, if known;
- vii. Names of schools and/or colleges that were attended, if known; and
- viii. Dates and places of marriages and deaths.

(c) When the information in the agency record is sufficient to complete a search, the search shall also include:

1. A review of current telephone books on a Statewide basis, and a review of previously published telephone books on a Statewide basis, if accessible, or utilization of a telephone information service provided that

the adult adoptee, birth parents or adoptive parents agree to such a service;

2. Sending a "blind" letter to the Social Security Administration for subsequent mailing to family members;

3. Contacting military, union, employment and/or club affiliation;

4. Contacting high school or college alumni offices;

5. Contacting professional licensing boards;

6. Contacting the church where the adopted child was christened/baptized;

7. Contacting the local post office to check old addresses;

8. Contacting cemeteries, when the records indicate a deceased family member;

9. Contacting the local library or town hall to check on voter registration information;

10. Checking tax or real estate records; and

11. Sending letters to the last known addresses of all family members.

(d) The agency shall document and maintain on file all the aspects of a search as specified in (b) and (c) above that were undertaken on behalf of the adult adoptees, birth parents or adoptive parents.

(e) The agency shall provide a handbook or pamphlet to each adult adoptee, birth parent and adoptive parent that outlines the range of services that may be included in a search, the confidentiality rights/responsibilities of all parties that are involved in the search and the costs associated with the search.

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